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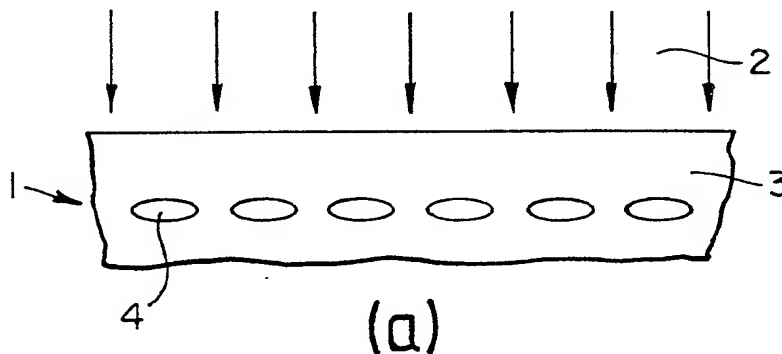
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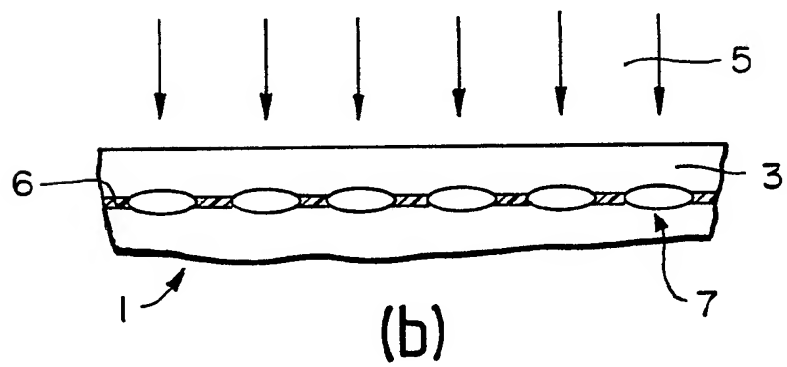
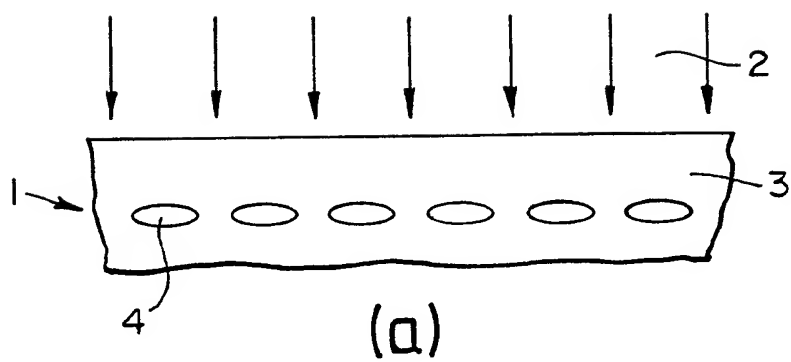
(54) Electrical isolation of regions within semiconductor bodies

(57) A process for producing a buried dielectric or high-resistivity layer within a body of semiconductor material comprising the operations of implanting ions (2) of hydrogen or an inert gas into the body at an energy and dose such as to form a layer of discrete bubbles and/or voids (4) within the body (3) of semiconductor material and subsequently implanting ions of oxygen or nitrogen into the semiconductor material at an energy and dose such as initially to stabilise the bubbles and/or voids within the semiconductor material and then form a layer of oxide or nitride of the semiconductor material bridging the gaps between the said bubbles and/or voids.



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Electrical Isolation of Regions within Semiconductor  
Bodies

5       The present invention relates to the electrical  
isolation of regions within a body of a semiconductor  
substance as a step in the production of micro electronic  
devices.

10       In order to produce micro electronic devices it is  
necessary to isolate adjacent elements of the electrical  
circuit concerned and to provide isolation between active  
devices and underlying substrate material. It has been  
shown that this can be done by producing one or more buried  
15       layers of high-resistivity or dielectric material within a  
silicon substrate body by implanting sufficient ions of  
oxygen or nitrogen to create a continuous layer of silicon  
oxide or nitride where the ions come to rest in the  
silicon. However, the ion doses required are very high  
( $>10^{18}$  ions  $\text{cm}^{-2}$ ) and the process is a difficult  
20       one to carry out economically due to the need for high  
fluxes of ions at energies of 150-200 KeV. It is  
desirable therefore to find alternative techniques that can  
be more attractive economically.

25       It is known that when high doses  
( $>10^{17}$  ions  $\text{cm}^{-2}$ ) of inert gas ions are implanted  
into a body of silicon, bubbles of gas are formed within  
the silicon. If the silicon is then subjected to a  
post-implantation anneal, there is a tendency both for the  
30       bubbles to migrate through the silicon and for the inert  
gas to diffuse through the silicon and escape from the  
surface of the silicon so leaving voids in the silicon. It  
has been found, furthermore, that if oxygen is implanted  
into the silicon after the inert gas, then, either at the  
35       time of bombardment or during a subsequent anneal, it will  
migrate to the bubbles, associate with them and stop their  
migration when the silicon is annealed.

According to the present invention there is provided a process for producing a buried dielectric or high-resistivity layer within a body of semiconductor material comprising the operations of implanting ions of hydrogen or an inert gas into the body at an energy and dose such as to form a layer of discrete bubbles and/or voids within the body of semiconductor material and subsequently implanting ions of oxygen or nitrogen into the semiconductor material at an energy and dose such as initially to stabilise the bubbles and/or voids within the semiconductor material and then form a layer of oxide or nitride of the semiconductor material bridging the gaps between the said bubbles and/or voids.

Suitable ion doses and energies for the formation of the bubbles and/or voids are at least  $10^{14}$  ions  $\text{cm}^{-2}$  and the range 10-100 KeV, respectively. The ion energy required depends on the depth at which it is desired to produce the buried layer of dielectric or high-resistivity material. It is to be noted that the implantation energy required to produce any given penetration for hydrogen is about half that required for helium. Also if hydrogen is implanted to form the bubbles or voids, then the implantation temperature should be kept below about 700°K.

Suitable ion doses for the implantation of the oxygen or nitrogen are at least  $10^{14}$  ions  $\text{cm}^{-2}$ . The energy required is about twice that for helium ions and five times that required for hydrogen.

Preferably the semiconductor material is silicon.

The invention will now be described by way of example with reference to the accompanying drawing which illustrates the steps involved in producing a buried dielectric layer by a process embodying the invention.

Referring to the drawing, a body 1 of single crystal silicon is subjected to bombardment with a beam 2 of helium ions at an energy of about 75 KeV until a dose of about  $10^{15}$  ions  $\text{cm}^{-2}$  is implanted. The temperature of  
5 the body 1 of silicon is maintained at about 600°K so that recrystallisation of the surface region 3 of the body 1 of silicon occurs continuously as the implanted helium ions pass through it. As a result of this bombardment an array of buried helium-filled bubbles 4 is formed as shown at (a)  
10 in the accompanying drawing.

The body 1 of silicon is then subjected to further bombardment with a beam 5 of ions of oxygen having an energy of 200 KeV until a dose of about  
15  $10^{15}$  ions  $\text{cm}^{-2}$  has been implanted. This time the temperature of the body 1 of silicon is maintained at between 800 and 900°K so as to facilitate the migration of the oxygen through the crystal lattice to the surfaces of the array of bubbles and/or voids 4. (Voids are now  
20 present because some of the helium will have diffused out of the bubbles as a result of the heating of the body 1 of silicon). Also, a layer 6 of silicon oxide is formed which bridges the gaps between the bubbles and/or voids 4, thus providing a continuous buried dielectric layer 7, as shown  
25 at (b) in the accompanying drawing.

Finally, the body 1 of silicon is annealed in an inert environment such as dry nitrogen in order to stabilise the structure and to remove any residual strain and/or disorder  
30 which may be present in the region of the body 1 of silicon above the buried dielectric layer 7.

If desired, the helium ions may be replaced by hydrogen ions and the oxygen ions by nitrogen ions. If the  
35 helium is replaced by hydrogen, then although the ion dose remains about the same, the energy required for a given depth of penetration is reduced by a factor of 2. The

temperature of the body 1 of silicon needs to be reduced to about 500°K. The implantation energy and dose of the oxygen or nitrogen remains the same as before.

5           It should be noted that there is an upper limit to the ion dose of the hydrogen or helium arising from the need to prevent the bubbles and/or voids from being so densely packed that they may coalesce to form a continuous defect which will allow the upper region of silicon to become  
10 detached. This ion dose varies with temperature but in general is above  $10^{18}$  ions  $\text{cm}^{-2}$ .

          Also, if required the ion implantations can be carried out through masks which define specific areas of the body  
15 of silicon which require to be provided with buried isolation.

          As this practice is standard in the art of micro electronic device production it is not thought necessary to  
20 describe such a variation of the process according to the invention, specifically.

          The invention is not restricted to the details of the foregoing example. For instance, the process might also be  
25 applied to other semiconducting materials, such as germanium, gallium arsenide, or layered structures of more than one semiconducting material, for the purpose of providing buried isolation.

Claims

1 A process for producing a buried dielectric or high-  
resistivity layer within a body of semiconductor material  
5 comprising the operations of implanting ions of hydrogen or  
an inert gas into the body at an energy and dose such as to  
form a layer of discrete bubbles and/or voids within the  
body of semiconductor material and subsequently implanting  
ions of oxygen or nitrogen into the semiconductor material  
10 at an energy and dose such as initially to stabilise the  
bubbles and/or voids within the semiconductor material and  
then form a layer of oxide or nitride of the semiconductor  
material bridging the gaps between the said bubbles and/or  
voids.

15 2 A process according to claims wherein the operation of  
forming a layer of discrete bubbles or voids within the  
body of semiconductor material comprises implanting the  
ions of hydrogen or inert gas to an ion dose within the  
20 range  $10^{14}$ - $10^{18}$  ions  $\text{cm}^{-2}$  and with an energy  
within the range 10 - 100 keV, the ion energy being  
selected so as to form the layer of bubbles or voids at a  
predetermined depth within the body of semiconductor  
material.

25 3 A process according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the  
oxygen or nitrogen is implanted to an ion dose within the  
range  $10^{14}$ - $10^{18}$  ions  $\text{cm}^{-2}$  and with an energy  
such that the ions of oxygen or nitrogen come to rest  
30 within the body of semiconductor material at the same depth  
as the layer of discrete bubbles or voids.

4 A process according to any of claims 1 to 3 wherein  
the semiconductor material is silicon.

35 5 A process according to claim 4 wherein there is

included the operations of bombarding the body of silicon with ions of helium having an energy of approximately 75 KeV until an ion dose of approximately  $10^{15}$  ions  $\text{cm}^{-2}$  has been implanted the body of silicon being  
5 maintained at a temperature such that recrystallisation of the surface region of the silicon through which the ions pass occurs, bombarding the silicon body with ions of oxygen or nitrogen having an energy of approximately 200 KeV until an ion dose of approximately  $10^{15}$  ions  
10  $\text{cm}^{-2}$  has been implanted the body of silicon being maintained at a temperature such as to facilitate the migration of the oxygen or nitrogen through the crystal lattice to the surfaces of the discrete bubbles or voids and the formation of a layer of silicon oxide or nitride  
15 bridging the gaps between the discrete bubbles or voids thus providing a continuous buried dielectric layer within the silicon body, and subjecting the body of silicon to an annealing operation.

20 6 A process according to claim wherein there is included the operations of bombarding the body of silicon with ions of hydrogen having an energy of approximately 40 KeV until an ion dose of approximately  $10^{15}$  ions  $\text{cm}^{-2}$  has been implanted the body of silicon being maintained at a  
25 temperature such that recrystallisation of the surface region of the silicon through which the ions pass occurs, bombarding the silicon body with ions of oxygen or nitrogen having an energy of approximately 200 KeV until an ion dose of approximately  $10^{15}$  ions  $\text{cm}^{-2}$  has been implanted  
30 the body of silicon being maintained at a temperature such as to facilitate the migration of the oxygen or nitrogen through the crystal lattice to the surfaces of the discrete bubbles or voids and the formation of a layer of silicon oxide or nitride bridging the gaps between the discrete  
35 bubbles or voids thus providing a continuous buried dielectric layer within the silicon body, and subjecting



the body of silicon to an annealing operation.

7 A process according to claim 5 wherein the body of  
silicon is maintained at a temperature of approximately  
5 600°K during the bombardment with helium ions and at a  
temperature within the range 8-900°K during the bombardment  
with oxygen or nitrogen ions.

8 A process according to claim 6 wherein the body of  
10 silicon is maintained at a temperature of approximately  
500°K during the bombardment with hydrogen ions and at a  
temperature within the range 8-900°K during the bombardment  
with oxygen or nitrogen ions.

15 9 A process according to any of claims 5 to 8 wherein  
the annealing process comprises the operation of heating  
the body of silicon to a temperature of approximately 700°K  
in an inert atmosphere.

20 10 A process according to any of claims 1 to 4 wherein  
the semiconductor material is germanium, or gallium  
arsenide.

11 A process according to any preceding claim wherein the  
25 buried layer is formed within specific regions of the body  
of semiconductor material only.

12 A process for producing a buried dielectric or high  
resistivity layer within a body of semiconductor material  
30 substantially as hereinbefore described and with reference  
to the accompanying drawings.

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